Amendments to the Claims

This Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions and Listings of Claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-5. (Canceled).

Claim 6 (Currently amended): An image pickup apparatus comprising:

a control unit adapted to determine whether said image pickup apparatus is set as a master camera;

a communication unit adapted to (a) transmit a time stamp to another image pickup apparatus if it is determined by said control unit that said image pickup apparatus is set as the master camera, and (b) receive the time stamp generated in another image pickup apparatus set as the master camera if it is determined by said control unit that said image pickup apparatus is not set as the master camera, wherein the time stamp is used to synchronize frame synchronization signals generated in said image pickup apparatus and another image pickup apparatus;

a time stamp generating unit adapted to generate a the time stamp, wherein said time stamp is used to synchronize frame synchronization signals generated in said image pickup apparatus and another image pickup apparatus using time information provided by said communication unit if it is determined by said control unit that said image pickup apparatus is set as the master camera, wherein the time information is used to manage a communication cycle of said communication unit;

a communication unit adapted to transmit said time stamp generated by said time stamp generating unit to said another image pickup apparatus if said image pickup apparatus is set as

~~a master camera, and receive said time stamp sent from said master camera if said image~~

~~pickup apparatus is not set as said master camera;~~

a frame synchronization signal generating unit adapted to <u>(a)</u> generate a frame

synchronization signal using ~~said~~ <u>the</u> time stamp generated by said time stamp generating unit

and time information if <u>it is determined by said control unit that</u> said image pickup apparatus

is set as ~~said~~ <u>the</u> master camera, and <u>(b)</u> generate a frame synchronization signal using ~~said~~ <u>the</u>

time stamp received by said communication unit and ~~said~~ <u>the</u> time information if <u>it is</u>

<u>determined by said control unit that</u> said image pickup apparatus is not set as ~~said~~ <u>the</u> master

~~camera, wherein said time information is used to manage a communication cycle of said~~

~~communication unit~~; and

an image data generating unit adapted to generate image data using ~~said~~ <u>the</u> frame

synchronization signal generated by said frame synchronization signal generating unit.

Claim 7 (Currently amended): An apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said

communication unit is adapted to transmit ~~said~~ <u>the</u> time stamp <u>to another image pickup</u>

<u>apparatus</u> by an isochronous transfer if <u>it is determined by said control unit that</u> said image

pickup apparatus is set as ~~said~~ <u>the</u> master camera.

Claim 8 (Currently amended): An apparatus according to claim 6, wherein ~~said~~ <u>the</u>

communication unit conforms to IEEE 1394-1995 standard or its extended standard.

Claims 9-11. (Canceled).

Claim 12 (Currently amended): A method of controlling an image pickup apparatus,

comprising the steps of:

3

determining whether the image pickup apparatus is set as a master camera;

transmitting, using a communication unit, a time stamp to another image pickup apparatus if it is determined in the determining step that the image pickup apparatus is set as the master camera, wherein the time stamp is used to synchronize frame synchronization signals generated in the image pickup apparatus and another image pickup apparatus;

receiving, using the communication unit, the time stamp generated in another image pickup apparatus set as the master camera if it is determined in the determining step that the image pickup apparatus is not set as the master camera;

generating a ~~a~~ the time stamp, ~~wherein said time stamp is used to synchronize frame synchronization signals generated in said image pickup apparatus and another image pickup apparatus~~ using time information provided by the communication unit if it is determined in the determining step that the image pickup apparatus is set as the master camera, wherein the time information is used to manage a communication cycle of the communication unit;

~~transmitting said time stamp generated in said time stamp generating step to said another image pickup apparatus using a communication unit if said image pickup apparatus is set as a master camera;~~

~~receiving said time stamp sent from said master camera using said communication unit if said image pickup apparatus is not set as said master camera;~~

generating a frame synchronization signal using ~~said~~ the time stamp generated in ~~said~~ the time stamp generating step and time information if ~~said~~ it is determined in the determining step that the image pickup apparatus is set as ~~said~~ the master camera, ~~wherein said time information is used to manage a communication cycle of said communication unit~~;

generating a frame synchronization signal using ~~said~~ the time stamp received in ~~said~~

the receiving step and ~~said~~ the time information if ~~said~~ it is determined in the determining step that the image pickup apparatus is not set as ~~said~~ the master camera; and

generating image data using ~~said~~ the generated frame synchronization signal ~~generated in said frame synchronization signal generating step~~.

Claim 13 (Currently amended): A method according to claim 12, wherein ~~said~~ the time stamp is transmitted to another image pickup apparatus by an isochronous transfer if ~~said~~ it is determined in the determining step that the image pickup apparatus is set as ~~said~~ the master camera.

Claim 14 (Currently amended): A method according to claim 12, wherein ~~said~~ the communication unit conforms to IEEE 1394-1995 standard or its extended standard.

Claims 15-17 (Canceled).

Claim 18 (Currently amended): An apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said ~~image pickup apparatus~~ control unit sets itself as ~~said~~ the master camera ~~according to~~ in accordance with a command sent from an external control apparatus.

Claim 19 (Currently amended): An apparatus according to claim 6, wherein ~~said~~ the time information is used to manage a communication cycle conformed to IEEE 1394-1995 standard.

Claim 20 (Currently amended): A method according to claim 12, further comprising a step of setting ~~said~~ the image pickup apparatus as ~~said~~ the master camera ~~according to~~ in accordance with a command sent from an external control apparatus.

Claim 21 (Currently amended): A method according to claim 12, wherein said the time information is used to manage a communication cycle conformed to IEEE 1394-1995 standard.